

Outcomes of Applications for Disability Benefits

Table 58.

Percentage distribution of final medical denials, by year of application and reason for denial, 1992–2003

	Total		Impairment did not or is not expected to last 12 months	Impairment is not severe	Able to do usual past work	Able to do other type of work	Other ^a
Year	Number	Percent					
All disabled beneficiaries							
1999	446,912	100.0	10.3	17.8	28.3	30.8	12.8
2000	456,693	100.0	10.1	17.2	28.2	30.4	14.1
2001	487,010	100.0	9.4	16.8	27.9	30.8	15.1
2002	541,312	100.0	8.8	17.2	27.9	30.6	15.5
2003	575,166	100.0	8.0	17.0	28.4	31.1	15.5
Workers							
1992	487,164	100.0	10.7	22.9	28.4	29.6	8.4
1993	546,532	100.0	10.4	22.7	27.6	29.8	9.5
1994	578,664	100.0	10.2	21.5	25.9	28.8	13.6
1995	547,232	100.0	10.6	20.8	25.4	29.4	13.8
1996	542,733	100.0	10.2	19.6	24.7	30.6	14.8
1997	449,880	100.0	10.7	18.6	25.8	30.6	14.2
1998	423,717	100.0	10.8	18.3	27.8	30.8	12.3
1999	420,445	100.0	10.7	17.4	29.3	30.1	12.6
2000	430,873	100.0	10.5	16.7	29.3	29.7	13.8
2001	461,384	100.0	9.7	16.4	28.9	30.2	14.9
2002	511,922	100.0	9.1	16.8	28.9	29.8	15.3
2003	543,201	100.0	8.3	16.7	29.4	30.4	15.3
Widow(er)s							
1999	9,677	100.0	5.6	29.1	31.8	22.7	10.8
2000	8,978	100.0	5.3	29.0	31.4	22.4	12.1
2001	8,624	100.0	4.7	27.6	31.1	22.8	13.7
2002	9,088	100.0	4.8	25.7	32.4	24.0	13.0
2003	9,847	100.0	4.6	24.7	33.4	24.2	13.0
Adult children							
1999	16,790	100.0	3.1	22.7	0.7	53.3	20.2
2000	16,842	100.0	2.9	22.9	0.7	51.9	21.7
2001	17,002	100.0	2.6	21.3	0.9	52.8	22.4
2002	20,302	100.0	2.3	21.4	0.8	53.6	21.8
2003	22,118	100.0	2.2	21.5	0.7	53.6	22.0

SOURCE: Social Security Administration, Disability Research file, 100 percent data.

NOTES: Data for the initial and reconsideration levels are current through June 2004. Data for the hearing level or above are current through August 2004.

Because a number of applications remain pending for more recent years, the numbers and percentages will change over time.

Applications with a medical decision may be pending a final nonmedical decision or be subsequently denied for nonmedical reasons.

Data include decisions for Social Security–only applications and applications for both Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI); they do not include SSI-only claims.

Data from 1992 to 1998 are available for disabled workers only.

a. Applicant has an impairment resulting from drug addiction or alcoholism, provided insufficient medical evidence, failed to cooperate, failed to follow prescribed treatment, did not want to continue development of the claim, or returned to substantial work before disability could be established. Also includes cases denied at or above the hearing level for which the basis of determination is not available.

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